

Monument Avenue, 2300 Block
Richmond
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1303

HABS
VA,
44-RICH,
122-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MONUMENT AVENUE, 2300 BLOCK

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Location: 2300 block of Monument Avenue, between Strawberry Street and Davis Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.

History and Description:

The 2300 block of Monument Avenue is bounded by Strawberry Street (formerly Addison) on the east and Davis Avenue (formerly Cedar) on the west. This block has fewer buildings and wider lots than most other blocks on the avenue, giving it a greater sense of space, especially on the south side, where lots are typically twice and sometimes as much as three times the width of lots on the north side of the block. All nineteen of the buildings on this block are single-family houses. At the intersection of Monument and Davis avenues is the monument to Jefferson Davis, a grand Beaux Arts endeavor. A giant column surmounted by the allegorical figure Vindicatrix is framed by a Doric colonnade; the statue of Davis is overwhelmed. Richmond sculptor Edward V. Valentine designed the two figures, while local architect W. C. Noland was responsible for the elaborate setting. The site was chosen nearly a year after the design was accepted in November 1903. The statue was unveiled in June 1907.

According to the 1901 plat by Crawford and Redd, five parties owned land on the 2300 block before it was divided into lots. William H. Palmer, James Caskie, and J. P. Branch owned land on the south side; business partners Allison and Addison, and C. W. Taylor owned land to the north. Branch sold his share of land on this block to the Kingsland Land Corporation in 1912. Kingsland then established deed restrictions resembling those adopted by the Allen heirs. Covenants specified there would be a 20' setback from the street, a 5' minimum side yard, and only one dwelling per lot "in keeping with the houses now on Monument Avenue, in this vicinity, to wit not less than \$6,000." One other restriction was the prohibition of black ownership.

Construction on the block spanned a sixteen-year period: the first building was erected in 1909 and the last house in 1925. In 1910 four families built homes on the north side of the street and in 1915 three more households were established. More than half the block was developed by 1915, as only six houses were built from 1916 to 1925.

With the work of at least ten architectural firms and an assortment of architectural styles represented, this block demonstrates the eclectic character of the first two decades of the twentieth century on Monument Avenue. Like other areas of the avenue, this block has several houses of the Colonial Revival style. The repetition of the style serves as a unifying element on the north side of the street, where it is represented in nine out of twelve instances. Red-brick fronts, slate-covered roofs, keystones over the windows, and wooden porches and balustrades characterize these freestanding two-and-a-half-story houses. The houses at Nos. 2300 and 2326 Monument Ave. are both three bays wide with side-hall entrances and side-gable roofs. In this form, but slightly more elaborate, is the house at No. 2306, which has a side-hall entrance heavily embellished with a portico, triple windows in the other bay, and a slate-covered hipped roof with three hip-roofed dormers in front. The house was designed by Albert F. Hunt and built in 1913. Charles K. Bryant designed the two-bay wide house at No. 2330, built in 1912-13; a one-story

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porch with a modillioned and denticulated cornice, repeated at the cornice of the building, ornaments the facade.

Scarborough and Howell designed the Colonial Revival houses at Nos. 2338 and 2340 Monument Ave., built in 1909 for different owners. Although both have one-bay, one-story entrance porticoes, they differ in form. The house at No. 2338 has a gabled pavilion projecting from the hipped roof to emphasize the entrance, whereas the house at No. 2340 has a more staid hipped roof with Palladian dormer. The house at 2336 Monument Ave. is contemporary with these other examples, but is four bays wide and lacks a porch. In 1926, William L. Bottomley designed a similar house, also four bays wide and without a porch, at No. 2320. Its modest appearance is emphasized by the slate-covered hip roof and denticulated cornice. The house at No. 2314 is the same form, but its green-tile roof adds an eclectic flair.

William L. Bottomley also designed two Colonial Revival-style houses on the south side of this block. Built in 1916-17, 2309 Monument Ave. is four bays wide with the entrance in the end bay. French doors at the first level and the mansard roof are eccentric departures for Bottomley's usual staid conservatism. In 1925, the house at No. 2301 was built. Here, a Corinthian-columned portico, topped with pineapples, adorns the central entrance.

The only house on the avenue with a two-story portico is strategically located facing the Davis monument at 2327 Monument Ave. The commanding two-story portico consists of four fluted columns, a classical entablature and a modillioned pediment ornamented with garlands draped from a shield in the center of the tympanum. A central entrance with sidelights and fanlight is formally balanced by a pair of shuttered windows on either side. Near the stone likeness of Jefferson Davis in the intersection, this columned house recollects Southern plantation homes of a bygone era. Built for Lewis H. Blair in 1913, six years after the Davis monument was unveiled, this house was designed by architect Walter D. Blair (whose relationship to the owner has not been established). Lewis Blair lived here only three years until his death in 1916, although members of the Blair family continued to reside at the house for several years. Blair heirs sold the property in 1947.

Other houses on the south side of the block have a Mediterranean flavor, accented by tile roofs. Architect Duncan Lee designed the houses at Nos. 2307 and 2325. The overhanging low-pitched hipped roofs with bracket supports, coupled with appropriate building materials of pinkish-beige stucco, green ceramic tile and louvered shutters, give an Italian look to the house at No. 2325. A three-story central block with subordinate attic is widened by two-story pavilions at either side. Strong bilateral symmetry is enhanced by a central entrance with heavy door decoration. A broken pediment is filled with a coat of arms that depicts an armor-clad forearm clenching a dagger above a shield. The building permit dated 1914 reflects an estimated construction cost of \$45,000. Jaquelin P. Taylor, president of his tobacco-related business, J. P. Taylor Company and chairman of the board for Planters National Bank, resided on Cary Street Road before moving to Monument Avenue. He purchased land for the site of his new house in three transactions. Katherine Wall Taylor, widow of Jaquelin, left the house to her son when she died in 1965, and his widow resides there now, making it one of the few residences on Monument Avenue to have direct and continuous association with an original owner.

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The Duncan Lee-designed house at No. 2307 is smaller than the Taylor house. Although similar in form, it is reduced to a three-bay facade since it lacks the two side wings seen at No. 2325. This richly textured brick and limestone house with ceramic tile roof incorporates classically inspired features at the windows and central entrance. The 1915 building permit indicates \$19,500 was the estimated cost of construction. Dr. H. Stuart MacLean purchased a 50' x 130' lot in 1915 from N. L. Massey and his wife, Jennie. MacLean, a physician and surgeon at Grace Hospital, lived there three years, only to return to his former home at 1030 W. Franklin. In May 1919, the MacLeans sold the house to Alice Burwell Reed, wife of William T. Reed, the president of a tobacco manufacturing business, Larns and Brothers Co.

William L. Bottomley designed the Mediterranean Revival house at **2315 Monument Ave.**, built in 1922 at an estimated cost of \$50,000. The stucco-covered dwelling has a cast-iron balcony and hipped, tile-clad roof. Stucco also covers **2319 Monument Ave.**, a small two-story house with a chimney adorning the front gable. The entrance is in the side of this tile-ornamented cottage.

These red-brick, Colonial Revival-inspired houses are punctuated by an eclectic mix of other styles, all compatible in scale and materials. Built in 1924, the house at **2304 Monument** has a five-bay front facade and a slate-covered hip roof, but its limestone ashlar cladding gives it a Renaissance Revival appearance. Architects Baskervill and Lambert designed the reinforced-concrete house at an estimated cost of \$77,000 for Dr. Stuart McGuire and his wife. Dr. McGuire was president of St. Luke's Hospital and the Medical College of Virginia. Like the residence at No. 2601, the facade of his house was modeled after Mompesson House at Salisbury, England. There is no evidence that McGuire requested the Baskervill firm to design a house after Mompesson, and it is peculiar that Robert Gamble Cabell III would engage architect Bottomley to design a similar residence one block down the street the very same year. When Baskervill asked McGuire what type of new house he wanted, the doctor replied, "I never consider what kind of operation my patients would like; build me a house." And so McGuire, who was in his mid-50s, entrusted his architect to prescribe an appropriate design for him and his wife.¹ The estimated cost of construction was an exorbitant \$77,000, ranking it the second-most expensive house erected on Monument Avenue, after the Branch house.

The house at **2324 Monument Ave.**, also clad with limestone, is a plainer version of the three-bay front, side-hall-plan town houses found on elsewhere on the avenue. Architect Marcellus Wright designed the house, which was built in 1913-14; fifteen years later it was altered according to designs by Baskervill and Lambert.

Also on the north side, No. **2312** introduces an architectural style not previously represented elsewhere along Monument Avenue. This elaborate Tudor house with stepped parapet gable, ribbed and vaulted porch, and pointed-arch entrance, looks more institutional than residential. It was designed by Carneal and Johnston and built in 1915. Its presence on other blocks of Monument Avenue would make it seem even more displaced, but the scale of other nearby houses and gardens allows it to contribute to the grand character of the 2300 block.

¹ Interview with Benjamin Warthen, third owner of the McGuire house (2304 Monument Ave.), August 16, 1991.

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Sources of Information:

Richmond City Directories.

Richmond Building Permits: 13461 (2304 Monument); 3340 (2306 Monument); 16415 (2320 Monument); 3558 (2324 Monument); 2925 (2326 Monument); 2889, 7434 (2330 Monument); 1059 (2338 Monument); 1004 (2340 Monument); 14566 (2301 Monument); 4579, 4580 (2307 Monument); 5213 (2309 Monument); 9736 (2315 Monument); 3771 (2325 Monument); 3120, 3389 (2327 Monument).

Deed Books: **2327 Monument:** 127A/20, 148A/472, 187A/002, 191C/250, 218A/360, 500C/263, 528B/454, 603B/130; **2325 Monument:** 125B/274, 219C/493, 222A/139, 258C/189, 223B/17, 222B/150, 820/111; **2307 Monument:** 125B/274, 195C/299, 125B/274, 232C/181, 252D/413, 426A/119, 257A/181, 493D/223, 221, 663C/68, 736/126; **2304 Monument:** 118/4, 295A/179, 568B/134, 571D/465, Will Book 130/191, Will Book 12/493.

Project Information:

This documentation of Monument Avenue was undertaken in summer 1991 by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), a division of the National Park Service, Washington, D.C., under the general direction of Robert J. Kapsch, chief. The project was sponsored by the Monument Avenue Centennial Committee, Millie Jones and Ceci Amrhein, co-chairpersons, and Sylvia Summers, director of development. Funding was provided by the Historic Monument Avenue and Fan District Foundation, the City of Richmond, the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, the Historic Richmond Foundation, the F. M. Kirby Foundation, Inc., and the Robert G. Cabell III and Maude Morgan Cabell Foundation.

HABS senior historian Alison K. Hoagland directed the project and edited this historical report. Kathy Edwards (University of California at Berkeley) was the field supervisor; Esme Howard (Yale University) and Toni Prawl (University of Missouri) were the team historians. Jonathan C. Spodek, AIA, produced architectural drawings and Jack Boucher took the photographs. The team's work resulted in the publication Monument Avenue, of which the report on this one block forms only a small portion. Researchers are referred to that volume for more information.

For more information on 2301 Monument Ave., see HABS No. VA-1260. On 2304 Monument Ave., see HABS No. VA-1324. On 2309 Monument Ave., see HABS No. VA-1266. On 2315 Monument Ave., see HABS No. VA-1255. On 2320 Monument Ave., see HABS No. VA-1256.

ADDENDUM TO:
2300 BLOCK MONUMENT AVENUE
Richmond
Independent City
Virginia

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